

Rockford Historic Preservation Commission

June 8, 2010 — 6:00 PM

Present: Janna Bailey, Maureen Flanagan, David Hagney, Vickie Krueger, Scott Sanders, Mark McInnis (arrived 6:10 PM)

Absent: Doug Mark

Staff: Ginny Gregory, Sandra Hawthorne, Jessica Roberts

Other: Elizabeth Dailing; Ronald & Julie Sunday; Scott Burfoot; Tim Mattila; Angela Lundin

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made by Scott Sanders to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting of April 13, 2010. The Motion was **SECONDED** by Janna Bailey and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

A **MOTION** was made by Janna Bailey to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting of May 4, 2010. The Motion was **SECONDED** by David Hagney and **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Certificates of Appropriateness

624 Grove Street – Elizabeth Dailing presented her request to install a wood, dog-eared style picket fence in the rear yard. After receiving assurance from Ms. Dailing that spacing between the pickets in the fence would match what is required in the Design Guidelines, Scott Sanders made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the installation of a wood, dog-eared style picket fence in the rear yard as shown on the submitted photographs. The Motion was **SECONDED** by Mark McInnis and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

910 North Prospect Street – Ronald & Julie Sunday, Applicants, explained that they had purchased this home for \$15,000 with the intent to demolish the house and combine the lot with 916 North Prospect. Mr. Sunday stated the lime basement is caving in, the furnaces are rusted out, and the roof is shot. He estimates \$20,000 to put in a new foundation and feels the home is not worth this amount due to the additional cost of repairs to the remainder of the house. It is their request to demolish this house, install a lawn, remove the chain link fence, and install a new wood fence on the south side of the property. Mr. Sunday stated he is not intending to put any monies into this dwelling. He further stated the City has not, as yet, condemned the house or specified that it is unsafe to inhabit.

Ginny Gregory explained that based on past experience, renovation cost is not one of the conditions considered in evaluating a proposed demolition. She went on to explain that the Applicant has the option of applying for an economic hardship should the Commission deny their

request, but only after a denial has been made. Mr. Sanders voiced his opinion of economic hardship, stating the Applicants purchased this house knowing what condition it was in at the time of purchase. David Hagney felt just about every building in Brown's Hills contributes to the District, and it would be worthwhile to have a building inspector evaluate the house. Mr. Sunday stated their whole goal was to improve the neighborhood. Mr. Sanders responded that the preference is restoration rather than elimination. The Sundays also own 922 North Prospect and are willing to invest in this property. Mr. McInnis stated his concern in setting a precedent of a property being purchased with the knowledge that the structure on it is in poor condition, and then turning around to request it be demolished for reasons of hardship. He feels this would be setting a bad example if this building were allowed to be demolished. Mr. Sanders stated by allowing every home that is in disrepair to be demolished, there is the possibility of thinning out Historic Districts.

Ginny Gregory explained to the Applicants they may wish to consider having Jim Vronch in Property Standards check the foundation and follow up on his recommendations.

A **MOTION** was made by David Hagney to **LAY OVER** this item to the July meeting, at which time Applicants will present a report of conditions from a City Building Inspector and a Structural Engineer to the Commission. The Motion was **SECONDED** Vickie Krueger and Carried by a vote of 6-0.

404-408 South Second Street – Scott Burfoot presented his request to retain a split rail fence. Mr. Burfoot had installed the fence on the corner of the apartment buildings at this location without a fence permit or a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ginny Gregory explained there was another instance in Haight Village where a split rail fence was installed without consulting the Commission, and it was deemed unacceptable and required to be removed. She further stated the Applicant's buildings are not yet historic.

Mr. Sanders did not feel a split rail fence is fitting with this area and would be more in a suburban setting. Mr. McInnis felt if the fence was consistent with the age of the district it would be more appropriate. Mr. Burfoot stated if he needed to install a different type of fence, he could not afford to do so. Mr. McInnis stated Mr. Burfoot has been aware of Historic District requirements in the past and should have been aware that he is required to come before the Board prior to installation of a fence. Mr. Sanders felt there were other options available at a comparable cost. Vickie Krueger asked if the Commission had the authority to have the entire yard fenced to which Ginny responded the consideration before the Board was what is currently installed. Mr. Burfoot asked if a chain link would be allowed, but because this is a front yard, City Ordinance does not allow chain link in the front yard. Discussion was held on attaching a 4' panel of fencing over the front of the fence which was acceptable to the applicant. A fence permit would need to be acquired by the Applicant as well, since one was not received prior to installation of the fence.

The Commission felt something resembling a picket fence would be appropriate for this property and suggested adding panels of picket fencing to the outside of the existing split rail fence. The Commission agreed that if the Applicant were to install one area of the existing fencing with privacy fencing, Scott Sanders would be the Commission's designate to approve the request after a site visit and determining if it was appropriate.

A **MOTION** was made by Scott Sanders to **APPROVE** the modification of the existing fencing by adding 4' high wood picket fence panels to the outside of the existing split rail fence with the

requirement that Scott Sanders check it after the first section is up. The Motion was **SECONDED** by Vicki Krueger and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

1900 North Rockton Avenue This property is West Middle School. Angela Lundin and Creig Day from Sharefest were present. Ms. Lundin explained their intent to put an AC unit on the roof of the west industrial wing with conduit running on the side of the building. They also wish to remove the existing sign at the west entrance, revise it and install the new sign on the north side of the sidewalk. They are open to suggestions on the sign. Ms. Lundin further explained there is a dust collector on the roof of the industrial wing that will be removed. Ms. Lundin stated they are painting on the inside of the building as well. Creig Day, also present from Sharefest, explained that painting and refurbishing the inside of the building will have to be done in stages. Mark McInnis asked if a wrought iron sign would be more appropriate; the Commission felt the wood was appropriate.

Scott Sanders drew a modified version of the type of sign shown in the application, extending the length of the legs. A **MOTION** was made by David Hagney to **APPROVE** the replacement of the existing sign with a new one of different style as based on the design sketched by Scott Sanders; install an AC condenser on the roof of the industrial wing, run conduit on the side of the building, and remove the dust collector from the roof of the industrial wing. The Motion was **SECONDED** by Mark McInnis and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

Introduction of new HPC staff

Ginny will be retiring in August, after serving her last HPC meeting in July. Jessica Roberts, Planner II with Community Development Construction Services Division, was introduced as Ginny's replacement.

Meeting schedule

Upon discussion, the Commission agreed future meetings will be on the second Tuesday of the month starting with the July 13th meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on violations – 400 block of Kishwaukee Street (401 thru 417)

Ginny stated she had driven by this property earlier in the day and reported that the hole in the roof of 401 Kishwaukee had been repaired. However, the Owner, Rockford Development LLC out of Machesney Park, has not contacted her in response to the letter she sent them last month.

A **MOTION** was made by David Hagney to **REFER** this item to the Legal Department for further action. The Motion was **SECONDED** by Mark McInnis and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

Design guidelines update

No updates at this time

With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra A. Hawthorne, Administrative Assistant
Historic Preservation Commission